

I submit to you that today, right now, this replacement of popular will by anti-majoritarian rule-rigging could destroy us. Today more than ever, voters want to know that their vote counts every election. And continuing to give minorities here in the Senate power to stop change is dangerously dissonant with the current political mood of this country. Take power away from the American people at your peril.

Finally, on this question of the value we should place on consistency, I want to raise the problem of the city firehouse. Firehouses are places that value consistency and tradition. Firefighters spend a lot of time in close quarters together. When that alarm rings, they are required to work together in precise and disciplined unison to get out the door in seconds in order to save lives and property. Practices change in a firehouse but carefully and through consensus decision making. Keeping everybody together matters when the stakes are so high.

But what would happen if inside that firehouse, a sizable group of firefighters decided one day that the mission of the department should no longer be to put out fires but maybe, instead, just to let them burn a little? Wouldn't then the value of consensus decision making become a little less important? If you were a homeowner, wouldn't you want to make sure that the firefighters who still wanted to fight fires were setting the rules and not the guys who are OK with the houses in the neighborhood burning down?

I know this is a crude analogy, but to value consistency or tradition above everything else, I think you have to be pretty certain that everybody in your club, everybody on your team is guided by the same foundational goal.

In the case of the U.S. Senate, our goal, our endgame has always been simple: the preservation of American democracy, the belief that every American should have a say in who governs, and the persons whom they choose and no one else should be seated in power.

We have had fights—often vicious in nature—over the course of our Nation's history over how fast we should expand the vote, how quickly we should reform our Constitution to allow for more direct democracy. But never before has one party actively advocated for the lessening of democracy. Never before has one party openly advocated for candidates who receive the smaller share of the vote to be made President of the United States.

In the last year, a democratic Rubicon has been crossed by one party, and we can't ignore this devastating blow to our Nation. You cannot value consistency in practice when a large faction of your group's members don't believe in the underlying mission of your organization any longer. The firehouse can't just keep doing the same things it always does year after year for the sake of consistency or tradition or con-

sensus when two or three of the members who hop on the firetruck when that alarm sounds aren't intending to actually put out the fire when they arrive at the building.

Giving Republicans a veto power over legislation when they no longer believe in the same way the Democrats do or Republicans used to in the sacredness of the vote is to risk the voluntary destruction of our democracy.

Consistency as a value has merit. It does. But in this business, consistency is often put on an unhealthy pedestal. What is the value of being consistent when all of the circumstances around you are changing? Where is the strength in sticking to your position when everything around you is in metamorphosis? When democracy itself is being attacked in a brutal, coordinated, unprecedented volley of blows, what is the good of holding to a position just for the sake of being consistent if the primary consequence is to simply green light the assault to continue?

Consistency and tradition and bipartisanship—they matter but not at the expense of democracy, not in a moment when millions of voters are questioning the wisdom of American democracy because no matter whom they elect, nothing seems to change, and not when one party has increasingly abandoned the joint project to which all Members of this body swore an oath as a condition of our membership.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I know Senator MARSHALL is ready to speak, and I apologize for delaying him with my rather long remarks.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SESQUICENTENNIAL OF CALVERT CITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, for 150 years, Calvert City has been a central hub of the Jackson Purchase, serving as a focal point for pioneers, farmers, and railroaders from all over western Kentucky. The town's enduring legacy is a tribute to the enterprising demeanor of those trailblazing Kentuckians who first called the Purchase home. In recognition of Calvert City's sesquicentennial, I am privileged to join this vibrant Kentucky community in celebrating 150 years of Bluegrass heritage.

Calvert City started off as nothing more than a depot alongside the Paducah & Elizabethtown Railroad, but

quickly blossomed as settlers spread west into the Jackson Purchase to profit from the region's fertile soil and easy access to the Tennessee, Cumberland, Ohio, and Mississippi Rivers. By the time the Kentucky Dam was completed nearby in 1944, bringing jobs and hydroelectric power to the region, the town was a flourishing center of commerce. Today, Calvert City is home to numerous advanced chemical manufacturing facilities and continues to play a critical role in western Kentucky's economy.

In recognition of Calvert City's pioneer spirit, the town is celebrating 150 years of history with 150 events throughout the calendar year. These ceremonies are made especially poignant by the passing of Mayor Lynn Boyd Jones this January. He had dreamed about Calvert City's 150th anniversary since the town's centennial 50 years ago and was an early planner of this year's festivities.

As Kentucky emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, the celebration will be a uniquely joyous tribute. All aspects of Calvert City's storied history will be on display, from railroad cars, to an auto show, to events at Oak Hill, the original home of town founder Potilla Calvert.

I want to give special thanks to the Calvert City civic leaders who made this year's sesquicentennial celebration possible. It is through their hard work and dedication that the town continues to prosper, so many years after its founding. On behalf of the Senate, I share our congratulations with every Calvert City family and join them in honoring 150 years of proud Kentucky traditions.

LGBTQ PRIDE MONTH

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise in recognition of LGBTQ Pride Month of 2021. For more than 50 years, Pride Month has offered us a chance to celebrate lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer—LGBTQ—Americans and to reflect upon the progress that our Nation has made in how we treat this community in law, policy, custom, and everyday life. It also is an opportunity to redouble our efforts to end enduring discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

President Biden promptly issued a Presidential proclamation recognizing June of 2021 as Pride Month. With the authorization of Secretary of State Antony Blinken, U.S. diplomatic missions around the world are displaying the pride flag as a clear visual representation of American values. On the very first day of his administration, President Biden issued an executive order on preventing and combating discrimination based on gender identity or sexual orientation. This decision has already driven new policies at the agency level making an important difference in real people's lives, from protecting transgender individuals seeking safe shelter to reversing the